

CLASSIFICATION **SECRET**COUNTRY East Germany REPORTTOPIC Military Activity in Altenburg and MerseburgEVALUATION PLACE OBTAINED

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DATE OF CONTENT DATE OBTAINED DATE PREPARED 2 March 1955REFERENCES PAGES 2 ENCLOSURES (NO. & TYPE) REMARKS

This is UNEVALUATED Information

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1. From 24 to 30 January 1955, the Flak Kaserne (8321) in Merseburg was occupied by a unit of approximately 2,500 men who wore red-bordered black epaulets with artillery insignia. On 26 and 28 January, intensive gun drill was noticed. About 6 to 8 soldiers trained with 17 x 100-mm AT guns which were lined up on the drill grounds. The four 152-mm model 1937 gun howitzers previously seen there were again observed.¹
2. During the period of observation, 3 guns of a new type, which had not been seen at the installation before, were observed. They were similar to the 152-mm gun howitzers, however, their barrels were about 2 meters longer. They had a caliber of 100 to 110-mm and could have been 100-mm field guns.²

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3. Between 28 January and 8 February 1955, the Artillerie Kaserne (8001) in Altenburg still quartered a unit of approximately 1,200 men who wore red-bordered black epaulets with artillery insignia. Five 152-mm gun howitzers were counted. The way the guns were parked in the garages, however, indicated that 22 guns were sheltered there.¹

4. Between 28 January and 8 February 1955, the Infanterie Kaserne (8002) in Altenburg still quartered the artillery unit of 1,000 soldiers. Only little close-order drill was conducted during the period of observation. After 25 January 1955, the 45-mm, 57-mm and 76-mm AT guns previously observed there were no longer seen at the installation. On 5 and 6 February, an unidentified gun of a larger caliber was seen in the kaserne for the first time, in addition to the 85-mm AT guns. Seven guns of the new type were seen.

Distinguishing features:

Barrel length: 3 to 3.5 meters, tapering to the end; calibers: about 120-mm; flush, rectangular protective shield projecting 50 to 60 cm beyond the barrels, no turned-back sides; wheels about 50 to 60 cm high.

At about 2300 on 5 February 1955, the 85-mm AT guns and the new guns moved out for the first time. Twenty-two trucks, each carrying 12 to 15 men with red-bordered black epaulets and 8 x 85-mm AT guns and 7 guns of the new type and 1 field kitchen were observed. The unit returned at 1830 on 6 February.²

1. Comment. Compare with other information on existence of 152-mm gun howitzers with various arty brigades of Eighth Gds Army.

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2. Comment. [redacted], personnel arrived for the 76th Arty Brig /XXX Gds Mtz Rifle Corps on 20 January, which may be connected with the supply of new weapons. [redacted]. The present report indicates that new guns of the same type and possibly of those previously recognized in Moscow as 122-mm (?) gun with unusually long barrels have arrived at the abovementioned brigade and at the 38th Army Arty Brig. It appears plausible that the brigades will now be equipped with these new guns after they had turned in AF guns by the end of 1954. This would mean a considerable improvement of the artillery force and antitank weapons.

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